

To: All Head Softball Coaches
From: Jerry Snodgrass, Assistant Commissioner/Baseball Administrator
Lauren Prochaska, Team Sports Program Coordinator
Re: Coaches Memo 4: April 18, 2016

The good weather is here! Certainly has been a frustrating start to the season for most of us but baseball and softball coaches handle the adversity as well as any sport coach. With the season in full swing, here are a few reminders for the week:

Doubleheaders on Weekdays/Sundays

Due to the lovely Ohio weather, we know that this is a very busy time for postponing and re-scheduling baseball games. Please remember also that you CAN play on Sundays, at least by OHSAA regulations—OHSAA does not have a regulation stating that you cannot play on Sundays. We leave this decision up to the two schools in competition. Obviously we advise that you check with your School District, prior to scheduling a Sunday contest.

3 Games on One Day

Softball Sport Regulations permit schools to play 3 contests on one non-school day ONE time per season.

Transfer Rule and Eligibility

We have received more correspondence on this than anything else over the past 2 weeks – a result of the cold, rainy weather and games being cancelled. Players that are on your team that have transferred to your school and do not meet one of the exceptions that would grant them immediate eligibility are Ineligible to participate for the first 13 *completed* games – NOT the first 13 SCHEDULED games. You can now understand why there have been so many correspondences on this. Most teams would have possibly completed half of their games (13). But...with the crazy weather, many only have 5-7 games in yet nearly a month of the season has gone by. Sorry, but it is what the rule states – ineligible for the first 50% of any sport they played the previous 12 months (that 50% in this case is rounded 'down' to 13). Hope for good weather. Keep in mind (and I always remind parents of this) under the 'old' transfer bylaw – they would have been ineligible for one calendar year from the date of transfer.

Non-Interscholastic Date

This might not be applicable to many schools, but this is a reminder that a baseball athlete who has **NOT** participated for a **school** team in softball that season, must cease non-interscholastic softball competition six weeks prior to the Monday of the State Tournament, in order to be eligible to play for OHSAA tournament competition. The non-interscholastic date is **April 18, 2016**. Even an athlete that has been playing for the school team, should no longer participate in non-interscholastic competition after April 18, to be eligible for OHSAA tournament play.

Non-Interscholastic Reminder

I cannot help but continually reminding as we have had 2 violations since last weekend. OHSAA General Sports Regulation 7 of the OHSAA's General Sports Regulation is the basis for players and coaches and the 'do's and don'ts' of non-school teams. You can reference this at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/rglts/GeneralSportsRegulations.pdf> In a nutshell, it basically indicates the following:

- During the season, team members may not tryout, practice OR compete with summer/fall ball/non-school teams.
- Outside the season, there is a limit of 4 players that played for the same school teams during the previous season on the same non-school team. There is an exception to this between May 27th and July 31st. This exception begins on May 27th for PLAYERS since it is the Friday prior to Memorial Day and there are a great number of Memorial Day tournaments around the state. This simply provides a little more flexibility to players and summer teams. This is assuming the school season is complete (see below).
- School coaches, paid or volunteer, may not coach or instruct players that played for their school teams the previous season anytime outside the school baseball season. There is an exception to this during June and July. The exception does NOT permit coaches to coach players from their school beginning on May 27th – **they must wait until June 1**. This only permits the players to PLAY in excess of that 50% limitation beginning then.

College Workouts

We have addressed this previously but another reminder does not hurt. Softball Players are NOT permitted to work out or tryout with college softball teams while a member of the school team. It is becoming more and more common for colleges to invite player to their campus/practice and work out with the college team. It might be permissible under NCAA regulations but is NOT permitted for high school athletes. It is considered NON-INTERSCHOLASTIC and not permitted. Again, please remind your players.

Sectional/District Seed Date Reminder

The 2016 Tournament Draw/Seeding Meeting will take place, statewide, on **Sunday, May 1, 2016 at 2:00 pm**. Either the tournament manager, District Athletic Board Member or appointed member, will reach out to you prior to the seeding/draw meeting, with further information. This is a reminder that the DAB's determine who is assigned and where they are assigned, at the Sectional and District tournament levels. If you would like to reference your District's information, please see your specific website below:

Central: www.cdab.org
East: www.eastohsaa.com
Northeast: www.nedab.org

Northwest: www.nwdab.org
Southeast: www.seodab.org
Southwest: www.swdab.org

Referendum Meetings

As you may or may not know, in the upcoming weeks, OHSAA Administrators will be going around the state conducting Referendum Meetings. Sport Administrators assist with the meetings, in making area schools aware of proposed changes to OHSAA Regulations and Bylaws that are in front of the membership to vote on. The process for changing rules is often a very misunderstood one – in order for bylaws (such as the transfer bylaw) to change, the **member schools must majority vote for that change**. You can read more about these meetings at:

<http://www.ohsaa.org/members/refvote/2016AthleticDiscMtgs.pdf>

From the Eyes of the Umpire

Here are a few items being addressed to ALL softball umpires this past week:

Batting Helmets & Chin Straps

There has been a misunderstanding and disagreement among umpires as to whether batting helmets are required to have chin straps.

Ruling - Under NFHS Rule 1-6 there is no requirement for chin straps on the batting helmets. **ASA/USA** Softball Rule 3-5E was changed this year and chin straps are no longer required. They are permitted as an option under either code. I believe that as helmets are now more modern and of a higher quality it has been determined that chin straps are often not necessary. They are still permitted for those who want to wear them.

Do Coaches Need to Sign The Line-up Card?

Is it a requirement that a high school coach must sign the line-up card and in so doing do they certify that all players are legally equipped?

Ruling - There is **no** rule that the coach must sign the lineup card - only NFHS Rules 3-5-1 and 4-1-2d that require the high school coach to verbally verify that players and equipment are in compliance with the rules.